

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4010

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T SANAA 1448

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, MOPS, YE, YS, SA

SUBJ: CC CHAIRMAN HAMDI ON PDRY BORDER CONCENTRATIONS

REF: SANAA 1427; STATE 150102

1. I CALLED ON COMMAND COUNCIL CHAIRMAN HAMDI AT 1115 HOURS JULY 14. HAMDI SAID THAT ALTHOUGH I HAD REQUESTED MEETING, HE HIMSELF HAD WANTED TO SEE ME.

2. HAMDI SAID THAT SINCE RETURNING FROM SAUDI ARABIA JULY 10 HE HAD RECEIVED NEWER INTELLIGENCE REPORT ON PDRY MILITARY BUILDUP ALONG YAR BORDER. ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT BUILDUP WAS CENTERED ON BUT NOT CONFINED TO PERIM ISLAND AND INVOLVED MIG-21 AIRCRAFT, SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES, AND AMPHIBIOUS VEHICLES.

PURPOSE OF BUILDUP, ACCORDING TO REPORT, WAS TO PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK ON YAR, PARTICULARLY IN BAB AL-MANDAB AREA. MOTIVATING FORCE, HOWEVER,

WAS SOVIET UNION. AS WAS WELL-KNOWN YARG MILITARY SITUATION VERY BAD; THERE NOT EVEN ENOUGH AMMUNITION FOR FORTY-EIGHT HOURS AND EQUIPMENT OLD AND WORN OUT. YARG WANTED ITS FRIENDS SUCH AS USG TO KNOW OF THIS REPORT AND WOULD WELCOME ADVICE ON WHAT TO DO. HAMDI PARTICULARLY ASKED ME TO CONVEY HIS DISQUIET AND CONCERN OVER THIS REPORT.

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3. I RESPONDED THAT WE HAD RECEIVED A NUMBER OF REPORTS ABOUT PDRY MILITARY CONCENTRATION OVER PAST MONTH. ONE OF THESE HAD IN FACT ALLEGED A PDRY INVASION NEXT MONTH. HOWEVER, WE HAD CONSIDERABLE RESERVATIONS ABOUT RELIABILITY OF THIS INFORMATION. I WOULD REPORT YARG INFORMATION TO WASHINGTON IMMEDIATELY. I WONDERED IN MEANTIME IF IT WOULD NOT BE USEFUL TO USE DIPLOMATIC MEANS, SINCE MOST ARAB STATES SUPPORTED YAR AGAINST PDRY, TO PLACE PRESSURE ON PDRY. HAD HE ALSO INFORMED SAG OF THESE REPORTS? HAMDI RESPONDED THAT SAG HAD JUST BEEN INFORMED AND THAT YARG CONSIDERING DIPLOMATIC MEASURES. REAL PROBLEM, HOWEVER, WAS WEAPONS. HE ASKED ME TO INFORM HIM OF ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

4. SUBSEQUENTLY I CALLED ON SAG CHARGE, BUT LEARNED HE HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED OF YARG REPORTS (IT APPARENTLY PASSED THROUGH SAG MILATT CHANNELS). HE PLANS NOTIFY SAG HIMSELF OF THIS INFORMATION.

5. ACTION REQUESTED. BELIEVE AS LONG AS YARG FEELS THAT IT UNABLE TO DEFEND ITSELF MILITARILY AGAINST PDRY, WE WILL FACE RECURRING DISQUIET AT HIGHEST LEVELS OF YARG OVER SUCH REPORTS. RECOMMEND THAT WE CONSULT FIRST OF ALL WITH SAG OVER THIS REPORT AND, THAT ONCE WE ARRIVE AT USG EVALUATION, THIS EVALUATION BE QUICKLY SHARED WITH HAMDI. BELIEVE THAT, AS IN CASE 1973 INVASION SCARE, PROBLEM IS PSYCHOLOGICAL AS WELL AS MILITARY. CONSEQUENTLY, WE NEED TO RESPOND TO HAMDI IN TERMS THAT CONVEY TO HIM OUR GENUINE CONCERN FOR YEMEN'S SITUATION OF WEAKNESS.
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